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written only by one himself profoundly versed in the department of knowledge to which they relate. They contain a well-digested *résumé* of the sources, development, and successive modifications of our language, with admirably chosen illustrations, drawn chiefly from the "less known fields" of English literature, and adapted to introduce to the knowledge of the hearers and readers the large class of valuable books which are at once easy of access and seldom sought. The style is graceful and attractive; the opinions are sound and ably vindicated; the purest taste as to words, idioms, and authors pervades the entire work; and its thoroughly, yet not obtrusively, didactic character commends it as a manual for those who would speak or write accurately and elegantly, or would read with discrimination and profit. So much learning and wisdom, weighty thought and just criticism, have seldom been condensed into an equal space, and still more rarely presented in a form so well adapted to all classes of intelligent readers.

25. — *The Law of the Territories*. Philadelphia. 1859. 12mo. pp. 127.

THIS little volume consists of two essays, the first of which, had it not outgrown its contemplated dimensions, would have appeared in the Philadelphia North American and United States Gazette, in which the second was published. The author assumes and defends a ground midway between the extreme parties as to the rightful jurisdiction over matters of municipal law, and especially over Slavery, in the Territories. He maintains that the provision of the Kansas and Nebraska Bill, which declares that the people of the Territories shall be "perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way," is opposed to the principles of natural law, to the Constitution of the United States, and to the provision of this very Bill by which it is declared that the Constitution extends to the Territories; and that legally and constitutionally sovereign authority over the Territories resides in Congress. But Congress stands to the inhabitants of a Territory *in loco parentis*. Its aim should not be to control the lawful will and preference of the inhabitants of a Territory, but, in the absence of separate and independent authority on their part, to give legal expression and force to that will and preference. To this end it may negative such local legislation as may, in the imperfectly organized condition and sparse population of the Territory, be procured by intrusion, usurpation, or fraud, and may consult the well-ascertained wishes of the people, in contravention of spurious acts of their legisla-

ture ; but it cannot impose upon them, at the dictation of any party or section, regulations or institutions uncongenial with their climate, social organization, or permanent interests. Slavery is strictly a local institution, with its conditions climatic, industrial, and social. Where these conditions exist in a Territory, Congress is bound to respect the implied compact of the Constitution, and the legitimate wishes and expectations of actual settlers. But where these conditions do not exist, the same implied contract guarantees to settlers the state of society, industry, and internal police which can exist only in connection with universal freedom, and which is frustrated and negated by the presence of slavery. These principles, involved in the Ordinance of 1787, and recognized in the Missouri Compromise, were first denied when that Compromise was abrogated ; and to this last-named epoch and transaction our author traces the sectional hostility and warfare which have given tone to the political discussions and transactions of the last few years, have led to the outrages in Kansas and the atrocious crimes recently perpetrated in Virginia, and still convulse the Union and embitter the opposing parties in its national councils. The discussion is able, earnest, bold, sustained by undoubted facts and what seems to us impregnable reasoning ; and the author fully vindicates his claim to be regarded as non-sectional in his sympathies, and a defender of our national Constitution and Union in conformity with the intent of the founders of the Constitution and the original parties to the Union.

26. — *Hits at American Whims and Hints for Home Use.* By FREDERIC W. SAWYER, Author of "A Plea for Amusements." Boston : Walker, Wise, & Co. 1860. 12mo. pp. 275.

THIS volume is a series of essays on society, law, books, amusements, philanthropy, and religion,—most of them prose satires on popular fashions, delusions, fallacies, and follies. Without keen wit, they abound in genial humor, and still more in sober *common* sense,—sense we should say, were not many of the topics those on which the *common* sense is *non-sense*. The author's castigations are inflicted not in the spirit of determined fault-finding, nor in that of cynical misanthropy ; but what we most of all like in the book is the tone of healthy and kindly feeling which pervades it. Its "hits" are at fair marks, and its "hints" are such as it would be well for society to take. It must do good, if the conventionalisms at which it aims are not too deeply seated to be displaced.